

**PET(4) WPI 03
Petitions Committee**

Consultation on petition P-03-262 Wales Peace Institute

Response from the Fellowship of Reconciliation in Wales



The Fellowship of Reconciliation in Wales

Glaslyn and Dwyryd Cell, Porthmadog

Chairman Pryderi Llwyd Jones **Secretary** Awel Irene

Abigail Phillips,
The Petitions Committee,
National Assembly for Wales, Cardiff.

November 1, 2011.

Petition to establish a Peace Institute in Wales

As a Cell of the Fellowship of Reconciliation in Wales which has been active for many years, we represent a large number of people in this area (e.g. at a recent public meeting, about 150 people came together to discuss matters relating to Wales's contribution to peace and to military developments in Wales). At the cell's monthly meeting on Saturday (October 29), it was decided that we should respond to your request for comments on the above petition. Along with the petition, you will have received information about the development of Peace Institutes in other countries, therefore we will not refer to that matter.

We wish to make the following points in support of the petition.

1. Although the Assembly has no responsibility for defence and war matters in the UK, it is clear that all the questions relating to the *establishment of a peace and justice system* are part of the fabric of the industry, economy, employment and trade which now form our global economy. This message needs to be explained at all levels, and undertaking that task would come within the remit of a Peace Institute.

2. While Voluntary/Campaigning Movements (NGO) – such as e.g. Cynefin y Werin (Common Ground), one of the movements supporting this petition – acknowledge the close connection between war and expenditure on arms on the one hand, and justice, human rights and world-wide health development on the other, it would seem that a medium through which this relationship could be illustrated is sorely needed. That would also come within the remit and responsibility of a Peace Institute.
3. Given that all governments – the Assembly, along with the Governments in London and in Brussels – consider the establishment of a system of World Peace to be high on the agenda, more collaboration is needed between governments and the increasing number of people working for world peace and justice. A Peace Institute would create the forum and the medium through which the vision could be shared and the aim promoted.
4. The Welsh Centre for International Affairs is associated with this petition. Although the United Nations (and its various departments) is the most important international establishment in terms of setting up a system of equality, justice and peace, it would appear that the UN very much needs to get much closer to the people, and to do so with urgency. The UN would have a **non-political** place, alongside others, within a Peace Institute. .
5. The need to raise the profile of peace studies – in schools, colleges and every other establishment – has never been greater than in these days when a *culture of war and violence* has permeated all parts of the world of young people. In the same way as governments over the centuries have seen the need to educate, train and develop for the purposes of war, so there is a need to give the same attention and resources to building peace, because peace between people is a long-term programme.
6. Wales and its Government are growing in confidence, and it would not be without meaning to talk of the ‘new Wales’. This development offers Wales the opportunity to move away from the old regimes that have supported empires and military establishments over the centuries. It is an opportunity to create *something new* and to show (like many other countries that have established peace academies) that the small states and nations have a huge contribution to make to the future of the world.

We very much hope that the Assembly Government will view this petition as opening the door and creating the opportunity for exciting and innovative development in the consideration of one of the biggest problems facing mankind. After all, now that we live in a small world, training in the use of unmanned aircraft between Aberporth and Epynt *does* pertain to the threat to world peace in the Middle East.

On behalf of the Porthmadog cell.

Pryderi Llwyd Jones (Chairman)

Awel Irene (Secretary)

Gwyn Williams (Treasurer)